

COMMITMENT



Texas Department of Health
Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program

November, 1997

Volume 6, Number 8

Wreath Project Raises Awareness of Breast Cancer Issues Across the State

In Austin, First Lady Laura Bush participated in a ceremony and placed a wreath on the steps of the Capitol to mark October 8 as the first Texas Breast Cancer Awareness Day. Governor George Bush was a surprise guest at the ceremony. Nancy Walker, a breast cancer survivor from Tomball, joined the First Lady in hanging the wreath (see photo).

Wreaths were also being hung on many county courthouses across the state.

In Abilene, Lee Hamilton, Taylor County Judge hung a wreath with Dorothy Thompson, YWCA, Sandy Saringer, Hendrick Medical Center, Wanda Braune, American Cancer Society and Christopher Ruud, M.D., M.D. Anderson Cancer Center (see photo).



(left to right) Philip Huang, M.D., Nancy Walker and First Lady Laura Bush hang the wreath at the Capitol to symbolize Breast Cancer Awareness Day in Texas.



(left to right) Christopher Ruud, M.D., Wanda Braune, Sandy Saringer, Dorothy Thompson and Lee Hamilton hang the wreath in Abilene.

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BCCCP Briefs

Training

The BCCCP State Conference will be held in San Antonio March 3-5 at the Airport Hilton. Watch your mail for details!

The **Nurse Oncology Education Program** (NOEP) has several course offerings around the state beginning in September and running through April of 1998. Call NOEP at 1-800-515-6770 for more information.

Internet Resources

Everything you want to know about the **Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation** can be found at their website at: <http://www.komen.org>

Y-Me National Breast Cancer Organization has a website that provides information and support to anyone who has been touched by breast cancer.

The **National Breast Cancer Coalition** has information on their grassroots efforts in the fight against breast cancer, their website address is: <http://www.natbcc.org>

Who to Call & How to Reach Us...

General Information/Administration:

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Local Changes

Please call or write Joy Gentry, Administrative Technician, with **ANY** changes in local phone numbers, personnel or providers. *Thank you.*

Don't Forget to Start Using New Data Forms

Old data forms will no longer be accepted at the State office beginning January 1, 1998. Any old forms received on or after this date will be returned to the



provider for transferring onto the new data forms. Contact Wanda Gibson, Public Health Technician, at (800) 452-1955 if you have any questions.

M.D. Anderson Training Classes

There are still openings for training classes offered by M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. The following is a list of these classes:

Breast Classes

November 10 - 13, 1997
February 9 - 12, 1998
April 20 - 23, 1998
June 1 - 4, 1998
July 13 - 16, 1998

Gynecology Classes

June 15 - 18, 1998

Nurse Colposcopy Classes

November 17 - 20, 1997
January 26 - 29, 1998
March 23 - 26, 1998

Please call Karen McAnarney, Nurse Consultant, at (800) 452-1955 for more information about the courses and registration.

Under-use of Pneumonia Vaccine Costs Lives

The Texas Department of Health (TDH) has reminded the public, physicians and nursing home personnel that the elderly, the very young and others with weakened immune systems are at risk of potentially life-threatening infection, if they have not been vaccinated against Streptococcal pneumoniae bacterial infections.

Also called pneumococcal disease, the illness can be prevented, in most cases by a one-shot immunization. However, lack of

public awareness about the vaccine and its effectiveness contributes to serious illness and death each year in Texas.

Beverly Ray, in TDH's Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Surveillance Division, said that although outbreaks of pneumococcal disease are uncommon, they can be devastating, spreading rapidly among unimmunized people.

Most people's immune systems are ample protection against

[Vaccine continued on page 3](#)

Ask The Expert

The questions for this month's "Ask the Expert" are **billing related**. Feel free to submit your own questions on any subject related to the program such as nursing, case management, billing, data or outreach. Send questions to Andrea Littlefield, Information Specialist, 1100 West 49th Street, Austin, TX 78756-3199.

Q: *Can a provider refer an abnormal Clinical Breast Exam (CBE) directly to a breast specialist, omitting the mammogram and still receive payment for services?*

A: Yes, the physician referral is considered a diagnostic procedure and both are eligible for reimbursement.

Q: *If a mammogram is done prior to a CBE, is this considered a comprehensive service and is the service reimbursable?*

A: No, the CBE must precede the mammogram in order to be eligible for reimbursement.



Self-Evaluation Report to the Sunset Advisory Commission

The first two sections of the Texas Department of Health's (TDH) Self-Evaluation Report to the Sunset Advisory Commission are now available on the TDH main web page. The first section contains the history of TDH, policymaking structure, funding and organization, strategic plan and an overview of all TDH regulatory programs. Section two contains five policy issues that TDH is currently discussing.

The Sunset Law was enacted to provide for the periodic review of the efficiency and effectiveness of state agency operations and policies. The Self-Evaluation Report is the first step in the review process.

You can access the report on the internet at: <http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/sunset/sunset.htm>. If you have any questions or comments, contact Kathy Talkington, Intergovernmental Policy, at (512) 458-7275.

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severe infections of the micro-organism. However, the elderly—especially those already weakened by illness—very young children whose immunities may not be fully developed and people with weakening chronic diseases, such as diabetes, AIDS, tuberculosis, heart disease and emphysema are at highest risk of developing infection.

For more information, contact Beverly Ray, Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Surveillance Division, at (512) 458-7676

Here to Serve You



For the benefit of new provider staff, we continue to introduce State office staff. Pictured above are (left to right) Lurah Oliver, Administrative Technician; June Browning, Data Entry Operator, and; Andrea Littlefield, Information Specialist. Call staff at (800) 452-1955 for assistance.

Avon Announces New Grant for Breast Cancer Awareness

Avon's Breast Cancer Awareness Crusade recently announced a new program called *Avon Kids Care*. The program includes an essay contest which asks kids to describe how and why they would encourage a favorite female grown-up to take good care of her health. Winners will each receive a \$1,000 savings bond and participate in national publicity.

In honor of the winners (four in each of Avon's four U.S. regions), Avon will award each of the 16 breast cancer programs a one-time \$50,000 grant, a total of \$800,000 in grant funding in March, 1998. Grants made through *Avon Kids Care* are administered by the National Alliance of Breast Cancer Organizations (NABCO).

Avon Kids Care grants will support worthy **community based outreach programs that**

provide medically underserved women with direct access to breast cancer education and screening. *Avon Kids Care* applications are due at NABCO on December 1, 1997; grant recipients will be notified in early February, 1998.

YWCA programs are not eligible as Avon provides funding to the YWCA as a part of the USA *ENCOREplus* program. Any organizations that have received a total of three grant awards from Avon's Breast Cancer Awareness Crusade (through either the *Avon Breast Health Access Fund* or through the *Avon Breast Cancer Leadership Awards*) cannot be considered for Avon Kids Care funding.

Please contact Andrea Littlefield, Information Specialist, at (800) 452-1955 to receive the Application information and the program's terms and restrictions.

Important Dates

November

November 11 - Veteran's Day
State Office Closed

November 27-28 - Thanksgiving
State Office Closed

December

December 24-26 - Christmas
State Office Closed

January

Must Use New Data Forms!

January 1 - New Year's Day
State Office Closed

January 19 - Martin Luther King
State Office Closed

Women Served*:

Breast Screenings:

Cervical Screenings:

Breast Cancers:

Cervical Carcinoma in situ:

Invasive Cervical Cancer:

*As of

Commitment

A monthly bulletin

Send news/information to:

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